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Chairman: Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 117: Human rights questions (continued)

(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives (continued)

1. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the following documents: the note by the Secretary-General on the human rights situation of the Lebanese detainees in Israel (A/58/218); the note by the Secretary-General regarding the report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan (A/58/334); the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq (A/58/338); the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the human rights situation in Sierra Leone (A/58/379); the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan (A/58/421); and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Burundi (A/58/448).

2. *It was so decided.*

(e) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (continued)
(A/58/36)

3. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/58/36).

4. *It was so decided.*

5. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 117.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (continued) (A/58/3; A/C.3/58/L.80)

Organization of work of the Third Committee and draft biennial programme of work of the Third Committee for 2004-2005 (A/C.3/58/L.80)

6. **Mr. de Barros** (Secretary of the Committee), drew attention to document A/C.3/58/L.80, which contained the draft biennial programme of work of the Third Committee for 2004-2005, and, said that a number of revisions should be made in consequence of the Committee's work over the past two weeks. In paragraph 6 and in annex II, items 3 (a) and (b) should be deleted. In paragraph 9, the subtitle ("Parents (periodicity to be determined)") of item 3 should be deleted. In annex II, item 10, the four references to the draft resolution on the promotion and protection of the rights of children should be revised to read "A/C.3/58/L.29/Rev.1"; and in the reference relating to the report of the Secretary-General on a comprehensive assessment of the United Nations response to the issue of children affected by armed conflict (resolution 57/190, para. 47 should be replaced by para 48. The list of items under 14 (b) in annex II should, in addition, contain the interim report to the General Assembly on the activities of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (A/C.3/58/L.53, para. 16). The third document mentioned in connection with item 14 (c) should be revised to read: "Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/C.3/58/L.79/Rev.1, para. 10)."

7. **Ms. Astanah Banu** (Malaysia) said that, owing to the position of human rights questions in the agenda, draft resolutions on the subject were submitted relatively late in the session and, through no fault of the Secretariat, were produced later than was convenient. She therefore proposed that the programme of work should be rearranged in such a way as to accommodate human rights questions at an earlier stage of the proceedings.

8. **The Chairman** said that the question would be considered at the next session of the Bureau.

9. **Ms. Astanah Banu** (Malaysia) said that, if her proposal was adopted only one week before the fifty-ninth session, there would be little time to change the deadlines for reports.

10. **Mr. de Barros** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Malaysian proposal could be taken into account when the Secretariat prepared the organization of work. It had been proposed to elect the members of the Bureau for 2004 in June or July rather than September or October and, if that proposal was adopted, the timetable would be less rushed than the Malaysian delegation feared. He noted, however, that deadlines for documentation involved coordination within the United Nations, both in New York and with the Offices in Geneva and Vienna. No changes could be made until all parties had been consulted.

11. **The Chairman** said that he took it that the Commission wished to adopt the draft biennial programme of work for 2004-2005, as orally revised.

12. *It was so decided.*

Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/58/3)

13. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should take note of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/58/3), in particular chapters I, III, V and VII, sections B, C and I, and chapter IX, which had been allocated to the Third Committee.

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **Mr. de Barros** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the correction to the report submitted by El Salvador would appear as document A/58/3/Corr.1.

16. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 12.

Agenda item 113: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (continued) (A/58/329; A/C.3/58/L.23/Rev.1 and L.25/Rev.1)

17. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (A/58/329).

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **Ms. Zack** (United States) reiterated her delegation's understanding that the Committee was taking note of all such reports in accordance with General Assembly decision 55/488.

20. **Ms. Elisha** (Benin) said that she wished to place on record her delegation's concern at the way that draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.23/Rev.1, of which Benin had been a sponsor, had been set aside by means of a vote that no action should be taken. Her delegation had

requested a suspension of the meeting in order to clarify the course of events, but the decision not to take action had been taken extremely quickly and her delegation had been unable to take part. The resolution had involved considerable preparation, and the Chairman should be vigilant in ensuring that a resolution could not be negated without adequate warning.

21. **Mr. Dhakal** (Nepal) said that his delegation had also been caught unawares and had thus not participated in the vote not to take action. He particularly regretted, in view of the importance of the resolution, that delegations had not been allowed to explain their position. His delegation had accepted the result, since it believed in the democratic process, but it would have preferred the procedure to unfold in a more transparent and comprehensible way.

22. **The Chairman**, referring to the draft resolution on the girl child (A/C.3/58/L.25/Rev.1), said that he wished to clarify the guidance that he had given on the rules of procedure. Where rule 129 had applied, he had clearly and consistently indicated as much, whether or not a delegation had requested a vote. Rule 129 had not, however, been applicable in the case of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.25/Rev.1: the United States delegation had submitted amendments, to be put to a vote, but had said that, whatever the result of the vote, it would join the consensus. The amendments had been rejected and the draft resolution adopted without a vote. In that case, therefore, the applicable rule had been rule 130 and not rule 129, the interpretation of which had proved difficult. Adoption without a vote was naturally the most favoured outcome, but where that was impossible committees were obliged to vote in accordance with the relevant rule.

23. He said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 113.

Completion of the Committee's work

24. After an exchange of courtesies, in which **Mr. Wood** (United Kingdom) and **Mr. Amorós Núñez** (Cuba) took part, **the Chairman** declared that the Third Committee had completed its work for the fifty-eighth session.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.